

WRESTLING FORUM

December 30, 1988

VOLUME III

issue 24

FROM ME AND MINE, HAPPY EIGHTY NINE!!!

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WELCOME 1989!

I feel kind of funny typing this, especially since Christmas is still a day away, but HAPPY NEW YEAR anyway! We hope your holiday season has been a safe and prosperous one. Again, thank you all for the avalanche of cards during the season.

Officially, this is the last issue of 1988, but no one will be reading until the new year. Next issue we will be starting all over with the numbering system with Volume 4 Issue 1. We will be celebrating our third birthday on February 15 and we've got a couple of special things planned for that issue.

Wrestling Forum is published on the 15th and 30th of each month and put in the mail the next day (most of the time). Rates are \$1.50 per issue and you may subscribe for any amount up to six months worth. All correspondence should be sent to Box 65, Knoxville, IL 61448 unless otherwise specified.

This issue we are lacking one of our regular features, namely the Wrestling Barometer. Jeff Siegel, who handles the column for us, is vacationing in India and won't be back until after the first of the year. We ask that you continue to send in your ballots as usual, however. The December Barometer will appear in the January 15th edition of the Forum and the January edition in the January 30th edition. From there, it will be back on its regular schedule of appearing in the 30th of the month editions. Jeff's address for these ballots is BOX 5461, Evanston, IL 60204.

Now it's after Christmas. You'd think we'd learn about certain things but it seems we never do. We've found another phrase to add to the list of oxy-morons (words that are mutually exclusive like Jumbo shrimp, military intelligence and Cub Highlights). This one is called EXPRESS MAIL. Sorry to offend those of you who are postal service workers, but this service is a joke. Starrcade 88 was supposed to be here via express mail on the 28th. It's not. So the Postal Service is \$12.00 richer. What a racket! Add that to the fact that more and more of our bulletins are being destroyed in the handling and we aren't very happy with the results we're getting. Let's hope that the tape arrives tomorrow or this issue probably won't go out until after the new year. I wonder why it is that my bills never get mangled on the way here?

We've only got a couple more days before the year end ballots are counted. I have begun work on the yearbook already and it should be available by the end of January. The tentative plan is to include the following: Exhaustive results of the balloting down to the wrestlers who received even one point in any category along with readers comments and reasoning for their picks; staff picks and comments; title histories for all the major titles for 1988; month by month news rundown; a composite wrestling barometer for the year; capsule profiles on wrestlers including real names where we can find them; a trivia section Jeopardy! style; plus more. The yearbook usually runs about 110 pages and it should again this year. It will be bound with a plastic spiral binding as in years past which means it will be durable. Cost is \$10.00 which will include 1st class postage (ha!). Please make out a separate check for the yearbook if you are renewing at the same time as yearbook checks are not cashed until the yearbook is sent out. To order address your order to WRESTLING FORUM YEARBOOK Box 65, Knoxville, IL 61448. You will not automatically receive the yearbook unless you order it as it is not part of the subscription package. Order as soon as possible as we will not be printing up extra issues.

Last issue we started the Wrestling Forum Masters Tournament and promised details on how it works this issue. Here with those details is Sean Grande along with a review of the first round match ups...

THE WRESTLING FORUM MASTERS TOURNAMENT

Last issue we told you we'd explain this new mini tournament that Sean Grande has set up. Here we go...

In the Wrestling Forum Masters Tournament, we have taken the champion of the regular tournament and the second place finisher (Flair and DiBiase respectively) and eliminated them up front. We have divided up the rest of the top stars into four teams or divisions. For two months, the wrestlers will wrestle round robin style within their own division. After that, the wrestlers with the best record from each division will advance to the championship round. The second place finishers from each division will the fight it out for 5th through 8th place. We will not only be keeping track of won loss records, but also vote totals (i.e. votes for and against) which will play a part in determining the finalists. Last issue we gave you the first month's match ups. Here they are again:

BLUE DIVISION

B. Windham vs RW Animal
T. Blanchard vs T. Gordy
R. Choshu vs B Windham
RW Animal vs T Blanchard
R Choshu vs T Gordy

GREEN DIVISION

R Savage vs E Gilbert
R Savage vs Sting
E Gilbert vs T Fujinami
T Fujinami vs T Taylor
Sting vs T Taylor

ORANGE DIVISION

O Hart vs RW Hawk
O Hart vs P Tanaka
RW Hawk vs A Anderson
A Anderson V A Maeda
P Tanaka v A Maeda

RED DIVISION

B Eaton vs S Hansen
B Eaton vs J Lawler
S hansen vs H Hogan
J Lawler vs B Hart
B Hart vs H Hogan

You don't have a lot of time to cast your votes because I'm sure the postal service is going to take a few days off for the New Years. Deadline is January 11 and you must send your votes to:

SEAN GRANDE

10 Waterside Plaza #26A
New York NY 10010

AMERICAN WRESTLING ASSOCIATION/WORLD CLASS/MEMPHIS

How'd those pictures of Kerry with both of his feet intact come out? They didn't. Here's the story I got from one of the wrestlers back stage...Kerry had promised Pro Wrestling Illustrated they could take pictures of him with both feet. But it seems that Kerry arrived at the arena too late and he told the photographers that he already had his ankle taped for his match and that he couldn't undo it. He made another promise for after the match. Now I didn't see this, but somewhere in the match with Lawler, Kerry "sprained" his ankle, or so he claims. Therefore, he had to leave the boot on for support. As usual, he showered with the boot on and left for the hotel with it still in place. After the card at a hotel bar, he was spotted with his now trademark tennis shoes and knee pad pulled down over the ankle. He didn't volunteer to do any foot shots there. I have just one question... how do you SPRAIN a "fused" ankle?

In some AWA news to start things off, they have announced that Don Muracco will be coming in to work a few dates. Muracco had resisted coming in full time until he realized that working for Verne would be anything but full time so he agreed to do some occasional shows. Verne isn't tying his wrestlers down like other promotions and will allow them to work elsewhere which makes Verne's offers more attractive.

Speaking of working with, windy City Wrestling has reached an agreement to at least exchange talent from time to time with the AWA. Tony Montana may be going there more or less full time as a manager, but other than that, this is not earth shattering news.

Jimmy Garvin had gone to Texas and the World Class promotion to team with Michael Hayes, but that arrangement has been very short lived. Garvin lasted exactly one week before he left for Titan. I understand he's already working arena shows opening cards but has yet to be on TV. More in the WWF report. Meanwhile Michael won't be left without a partner at least here, as he also has given notice. Hayes will start with the NWA on January 23. His last Sportatorium was last Friday night when he took a clean in the middle pin against the SST. This pretty much assures that the breakup of the Freebirds is permanent as each member is now with a different group.

Some random notes from Memphis...Sid Vicious took the CWA title from newcomer/rookie Brian Lee. Other newcomers to the group are Rick Casey who we haven't heard from in some time, Don Bass along with his new manager Boss Winters and the storm Trooper. Bass wrestled here most recently as the singing cowboy, a gimmick I sure hope he has dropped.

The RPM's started bringing a bag of money to the ring and promising that if they ever lost, they would throw the money to the crowd. I guess that they got tired of doing that after a while as they have left with no where to go. I'm told that they may just take regular jobs rather than try to find work in wrestling. Downtown Bruno, on the other hand, is not going anywhere for the time being. He's being shoved further down in the line up, but is staying with the promotion. We reported 1st issue that he was taking some time off and it turns out that it was due to a legit injury.

One of the reasons for the mass exodus all of a sudden from both Memphis and WCCW is Jarretts deep pockets and short arms. A lot of the wrestlers are complaining about the way they are being paid and not being able to make a living working. One of the best examples is Nature's Best, a tag team that was receiving a mild push when we conventioned there in October. They had been on the circuit a few weeks then and we haven't heard hide nor hair of them since. Young wrestlers just starting off seem to think that they can support themselves wrestling but find with no insurance benefits, getting hurt can be costly. They lose time at their regular jobs and find that wrestling part time isn't nearly as glamorous as they had been led to believe. That's why we

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see so many rookies here that only last a few weeks before moving on, never to be heard from again.

Chris Adams has surprised a few people by returning to World Class. Chris had promoted a few local independents in the Dallas market which infuriated Fritz, but since Fritz isn't in charge anymore, he was welcomed back providing he could work for the Jarretts. His return was a surprise to the fans. Eric Embry had been wrestling in a squash and Skandar Akbar sending in his men to take out Embry. Cactus Jack, Gary Young and the Bostwani beast tripled up on Embry before Brickhouse Brown came in for the save. It was just a few seconds later that Chris made his appearance. Fans weren't quite sure which side he was going to take, but he helped Embry and Brickhouse by superkicking Beast. Adams will be teaming with Jeff Jarrett to go against Young and Cactus in future shows.

When Derrick Dukes filled in for Jon Paul at Super-clash, he did so more or less on a one time basis. He impressed enough people that he was offered a full time position with the AWA as Ricky Rice's partner. These two have worked together for a long time as the Top Guns for Eddie Sharkey's promotion in Minnesota. They will continue to work as the Top Guns in the AWA.

Larry the Butcher Cameron is another who has been offered some sort of work. I understand he's been working some of the smaller spot shows up north and is doing his tremendous heel act. For some unknown reason, when Larry is introduced, the fans cheer. Within five minutes and before ever climbing in the ring, he has every single fan hating his guts.

Kevin Von Erich is still not wrestling and they aren't doing much to announce his retirement. I guess they're just going to let him fade into the sunset rather than make a big deal out of his leaving the sport.

ESPN is now alternating the AWA show and Legends of World Class on the 4:00 pm weekday slot. As of yet, I haven't been able to figure out any sort of pattern other than if you tune in at that time, you're going to see some sort of wrestling.

RENEIL POINTS

CODED MESSAGES

I have deciphered those annoying phrases wrestlers constantly use to try and confuse us fans. So, sit back, relax and enjoy...

WHAT THEY SAY.....and.....WHAT THEY MEAN
 "We ran them out of the territory".....They quit
 "He's on an attitudinal adjustment tour".....He was fired
 "The competition was too tough for him/her".....they fond a better job
 "We're the only REAL wrestling federation".....Brand X
 "Space Mountain is all night long".....3 to 5 minutes
 "I'm the hearbeat of America".....headache
 "Dusty Rhodes is a living legend".....pay us this week
 "Dusty Rhodes was one of the greatest world champs.pay us this week
 "Dusty Rhodes is the American Dream".....pay us this week
 "I travel everywhere in a limousine".....I own a Yugo
 "Starting tonight at 8:00".....8:45
 "I eat only in the finest restaurants".....Burger King
 "We proved the NWA was superior to the UWF".....we blew it
 "'Dusty Rhodes won the bunkhouse stampede again"..we blew it
 "The midnight rider has ridden into the sunset"...we blew it
 "Elizabeth will take off her skirt".....for you perverts
 "Hulk now wears a war bonnet".....hair today, gone tomorrow
 "I own my own airplane".....bought at Toys R Us

-JEANETTE CRUMP-

-Fairfield, CA-

SURVIVING LIVE

I went to the Survivor Series live. I thought the whole show was good and your B- rating was pretty accurate. It was hilarious when the fans cheered the Powers of Pain and booed Demolition. It hit me what happened about two minutes afterward. I thought it was well done though. The one thing I had to laugh at was how well hidden the empty seats were. They position those lights just perfect.

-DAN DOUGLAS-

-Clarion, PA-

MORE ON WITCHI'S

In those days (seventies) the matches always began at 8:30 and a lot of times the main event ended on the 11pm curfew. They always had like 3 or 4 jobber vs jobber matches and one main event. One week though (and I remember it like it was yesterday) here was the lineup: January 5, 1973...Mr. Fuji pinned El Olimpico; King Curtis pinned Arnold Skaaland; Sonny King by count out over Toru Tanaka; Moondog Mayne beat Manuel Soto; Oedro morales defeated Buddy Wolfe; Tony Garea over Chuck O'Connor. What a great card for a Witchi's show! I remember how cold it was outside and after, there being in there for an hour or so I was sweating. They actually opened the doors to cool down the building that night. I always prayed that place never caught fire because it was all wood and people were allowed to smoke inside. No one was surprised when it did finally burn down in less than a half hour.

Other memories include SD Jones showing my brothers his headbutt against the steel padded dressing room door...Andre's head just about clearing those ringside ceiling lights (I have some great pictures where you can see just how low those lights were).

The cards were posted in my local paper every Thursday night and Friday morning. My brother and i used to cut them out and save them and we still have them.

I remember seeing a believable George Steele terrorize ringsiders chasing them out the door in some cases.

I became a serious fan around 1971 and most of my best memories are from this period. The sign is still in the parking lot "Wrestling Every Friday Night" and they still have the flea market every weekend

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but sadly, no more wrestling. I could go on and on about the times at Witchi's. They had local promos on area TV. Those commercials were great; I wish I had a VCR in those days. I hate you Vince.

-ANTHONY PARILLO-

-Providence, RI-

CALL FOR BOYCOTT

I notice in the most recent editions of the Apter mags (PWI, the Wrestler, Inside Wrestling, etc) that the WFIA has a half page ad. You probably remember them. They are the ones who can't produce four magazines a year, are reduced to a one page news-gram once a month now that is for the most part useless, and fail to have conventions. I also notice that despite the presence of PWI photog Sam Lowe at convention, there has been nary a mention of the UAWF confab in Memphis. What gives? We're we news? Or was it because us being "smart fans" that we get second rate treatment from the Apter people? I remember a few months ago you giving the class act award to Apter and company for weeding out advertisers that weren't giving what they promised. Are they afraid that the WFIA will pull their ads if they mention the UAWF? My suggestion is this: Stop buying the Apter magazines until the UAWF is given some positive press in regards to the convention. I can't believe that Eddie, Missy, Paul E., Al Costello and Lou Thesz sitting at the same table along with Boyd Pierce, the Combses, the Windy City people and Downtown Bruno isn't newsworthy...especially when they had a photographer there!

-A UAWF CONVENTIONEER-

-Parts Unknown-

PRAISE AND COMPLAINTS

I would like to extend some praise and voice a gripe. My praise goes to the NWA for its handling of the Gilbert/Simmons vs Fantastics match recently broadcast as part of the TV special. Here was an exciting match between faces, proving that such pairings will draw a lot of heat if worked correctly. By "correct work" I mean the match told a story. Both teams had strategies. While the crowd favored the Fantastics, Gilbert's courageous battle in spite of his "injury" won over many of the spectators and made the place go wild. We had a clean pinfall when one strategy finally prevailed over the other. Such matches take a little time, but they are three times more satisfying than the average fare being dished out these days. While it is too much to expect of the WWF, I hope that the NWA and other promotions will give us increasingly more matches that are executed in realistic ways. I really do believe the fans will respond positively.¶

My gripe concerns the current rash of reversed decisions based upon the later examinations of matches by "governing boards." Of course, in real competitive sports, such reviews are not uncommon, even though the infractions and errors are not blatant as they are in wrestling. My problem here is that half or more of the matches in wrestling are decided on the basis of a foreign object, outside interference, etc. Often they are undetected by the referees and no reviews occur. That's fine. That's the way it's supposed to be. But to hold arbitrary reviews on rare occasions while looking the other way 98% of the time makes the whole process look mighty fishy to the casual fan. Verne and Dusty have been guilty of this recently when key players in major roles have left, upsetting the booker's plans. The more inconsistency, the more fake wrestling looks. There must be a better way.

-DR. DON G. SMITH-

-Webster, NY-

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE

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The big story from here will be Starrcade which will long be history when you read this. But, the first page of this report has to be done before I see the tape so we'll get to those results in just a little bit. We'll cover some of the other happenings first.

Good news and bad news about the Saturday morning TV show...first the bad news. David Crockett is the host of the show. No Jim Ross. No Tony Shivone. Just David. The good news is that for the next few weeks at least, Paul E Dangerously and Jim Cornette will alternate co hosting the show so it may be worth tuning in for. Speakin' of this trio, Paul had a great line a couple weeks back. On the syndicated show he put his arm around Tony and said, "We all know why David's here, but who are you related to, Tony?". It sounds as though they are going to turn Paul loose here any time so things could start getting good.

There's been a few more confrontations between Paul and Jim. The Midnight vs Midnight feud may not have a lot of time left in it (I would guess two to three months tops), but the feud between Jim and Paul could be legendary with Paul continually bringing in new faces to take on Cornette's crew. In what could be the most talked about interview of the year, Paul comes to the desk with Tony Shivone on the syndicated show and is told an upcoming match with the Fantastics will be 2 of 3 falls. Paul looks at him and says "So what are you...the booker?" To further send a message to inside fans, he takes a pencil out of his pocket (pencil is wrestlers' slang for booker) but explains that you can pencil anyone's name in on the contract, but his Midnight Express are the erasers. Cute. Now I'd bet someone is having a heart attack with these inside comments. Either that, or someone is looking real hard through the sheets to see if they made them or not.

I'm not sure if this next was intended as a Christmas present or not, but the opening match on the Christmas Eve TBS show featured Misty Blue & Heidi Lee Morgan vs Kat LeRoux and Linda Dallas. Dallas was wearing an arm sleeve like the AWA Master Blaster used to wear. Now I always thought it looked dumb on him coz it looked like one of those things they use to train attack dogs with. With these four in the ring, it somehow looked appropriate. I don't mean to be cruel, but the average age of those in the ring must have been 175 (in human years).

Jim Cornette got his chance to dog sit (speaking of dogs) this week. I guess Rick Steiner is going to make a habit of bringing his pet dog to the ring. Last week, Jim Ross got to dog sit while Steiner wrestled and this week, Rick was in a six man with Ivan and the JUNK Yard Dog and came out and handed this dog to Cornette who had just done an interview. Cornette spent the match trying to palm the dog off on someone else (which at least kept the camera off the ring) and was pretty funny. You may have missed the line Cornette said about his own dog almost being killed by a great dane cos the great dane got stuck in his dog's throat. It's going to be hard to live with another animal in wrestling and even harder if someone dares to kidnap (dognap?) the dog like they did with Mathilda.

On the same show, Eddie Gilbert challenged Barry Windham for the US championship. They worked a pretty decent match, but watching what they are doing with Eddie is strange. It's almost like they don't want anyone to remember him from the past and that he's an up and comer like the role Terry Taylor has in the WWF right now. Windham came to the ring acting very arrogant and self confident and opened the match by manhandling Gilbert at will. Gilbert's role was to be the complete and ultimate underdog and Ross and Shivone played up that fact. They kept talking about all his heart and his never say quit attitude that he displayed at the last Clash of Champions. As I said, it was a decent match with Gilbert taking a pretty good beating. I have a feeling they ran just a little long because the ending seemed to be a little messed up. Windham had tried just about everything in the world to pin Eddie,

but he had kicked out of everything. All of a sudden, JJ jumped up on the apron as Eddie was being whipped into the ropes and he kneed Eddie in the kidneys. Referee Teddy Long had to turn away quickly to avoid seeing this (which looked real dumb since there was no reason to turn away) and Barry got the pin. Barry, JJ and Ric Flair then appeared at the podium to do an interview, but Eddie came over to challenge them. Flair and Barry went after Eddie and threw him into the ring and started to go two on one before Bam Bam Bigelow rolled in to even the odds. No one knows what happened after that as the cut off and ended the show. I've got a feeling they would have like to have ended the match a little sooner and shown more of the confrontation.

The tape made it after 62 hours (they promised overnight...they just didn't say which night). Here is your Starrcade report...

FANTASTICS VS KEVIN SULLIVAN/STEVE WILLIAMS

A big card (or for that matter, any card) should open with an average match; one that won't create too much heat so the crowd doesn't expend themselves too early, yet one that will hold interest and set a pace for the rest of the show. This one did just that. It was by no means spectacular, yet managed to hold interest for the most part. Tommy Rogers was especially good in this bout and stood out. He did a superfly leap at one point onto Sullivan who at the last minute raised his feet. The bump had to have hurt big time and as a matter of fact when Doc tagged in, he let Rogers rest a little (probably had the wind knocked out of him) before going on. Jim Ross, once again doing an excellent job with the announcing chores, covered this by saying that Steve was "taunting" him. Good cover. Fulton didn't look like he was in a real selling mood as he failed to sell a few thumbs to the eyes by Sullivan. Doc looked okay and did his impressive power moves, pressing Fulton a few times above his head. Kevin Sullivan looked like he was doing his best impression of Buddy Rose or Ophra Winfrey.

The end of the match came when Fulton had a sleeper on Doc. Rogers and Sullivan were battling in the ring as well. Fulton released the sleeper and went for a Thesz press, but Doc caught him and turned it into a Hot Shot, dropping Fulton on his throat. Doc then scored a clean pin and the Varsity Club is the new US Champions.

Match was a bit below average, but not much. Grade C-.

MIDNIGHT EXPRESS VS MIDNIGHT EXPRESS

A few comments first. Paul E finally bought a new suit. It's about time. Jim Cornette took off his jacket and looks like he may be due about the same time my wife is. Originals entered first followed by Lane/Eaton. There was no intro or bell, just a brawl. You could tell the teams hadn't worked together that much as there was a lack of fluidity throughout. The first five minute or so saw the Originals having a move done on them and them rolling out of the ring. Condrey was first and got a good whack with Jim Cornette's racquet across the back. Rose did the same thing a couple of minutes later. Eaton/Lane controlled the early part with the obligatory turnaround at about the ten minute mark. The Originals beat on Bobby quite a bit until he got the hot tag at about the 15:00 point. The end came soon after that as Condrey and Eaton were struggling on one side of the ring when the referee got caught between them. No real bump here, but it took the ref out of the action for a couple of important minutes. Paul E hit the ring and phoned Lane and put Rose on top for the pin. Cornette hit the ring and took out Paul. Teddy Long recovered and saw the pinning combination and counted one-two before noticing that there was a phone in the ring. He picked it up and questioned Paul. While he's doing this, Rose is holding his hands out wandering around the ring pleading his innocence. Eaton and Lane hit him with the double goosel and by golly, we got ourselves another clean pin (as clean as they get here). After the match, the Originals beat up on Cornette and Lane until Eaton found the racquet and cleaned house. Not a bad match, but it could have and should have been better. The end saved this from getting a

lower grade. I gave it a C overall.

RUSSIAN ASSASSINS VS IVAN KOLOFF/JUNK YARD DOG

It was as bad as you could imagine. I had to put this in Fast Forward just to make it look like a normal match. Ivan had Sheldon pinned at the end, but Jones gave Victory the foreign object and he put it in his mask and headbutted Ivan. Three seconds later we learned that Paul Jones was staying around. Grade: D-, just because the hoods tried a little. Hard to work with JYD and an old guy.

MIKE ROTUNDO VS RICK STEINER

This wasn't a bad match. Steiner is super over with the fans (then again, JYD got quite a welcome too). The match went back and forth until the 15:00 mark when Steve Williams came to ringside. Steiner caught Rotundo in a powerslam that Rotundo kick out of at the count of two and a half. Steiner then did his belly to belly and went for the pin but Doc rang the bell and the ref thought the match was over. Tommy Young came down to explain things to Teddy while they released Kevin Sullivan from his cage that had been suspended over the ring. The match was ordered restarted and Rotundo slugged Steiner, but Rick managed to push him into Sullivan and Young. Steiner then quickly cover Mike and got the pin. So, Rick Steiner is now the TV champion. As I said, not a bad match and it gets a B- from me.

BARRY WINDHAM VS BAM BAM BIGELOW

There are several stories circulating about why Bam Bam returned. One has it that he never left, quit or got fired and that he had simply went home a few days early for Christmas. Another has him being sick with the dreaded "Dusty Flu" and yet another says he quit and was threatened with a lawsuit if he didn't continue to wrestle. Who knows. Anyway, the match took place as scheduled.

It was a pretty decent match with Barry working extremely hard and Bam Bam putting on a good performance as well. Both took their individual bumps well. At the end (the match went just over 15:00) they were doing a run off the ropes with some missed clotheslines by Bam Bam. Windham rebounded into a flying bodypress and both wrestlers tumbled over the top rope onto the arena floor. The battle there for a minute (the bump over the top rope was the highlight of the match and I believe it may have taken out the cameraman who was trying to shoot the angle) before Windham rolled back in the ring beating the count. So, Windham retains this title by COR over Bam Bam who still refused to stare at the lights for three seconds. Match gets a B- and might have been higher, but the quick count out ending took something away. All night referees had been going outside the ring to get wrestlers back in instead of counting them out. This time, the ref started counting as soon as they hit the arena floor.

ROAD WARRIORS VS STING/DUSTY RHODES

This started out as a good brawl and got better. Sting was especially outstanding in this one as he was charged up it looked like, and he put out as much if not more than he ever has. At one point he mounted the top turnbuckle and did a flying bodypress on Animal while Animal was outside on the arena floor. Sting was the superman here with the Warriors not being able to do much offensively against him (at least not for any extended period of time). Dusty on the other hand, sold just about everything (with the exception of one sequence where he tried to make the crowd believe he was Hulk Hogan by shaking and jiving each time he got hit). The end came after a nice series by Sting and Animal after the hot tag. Sting put Animal in the scorpion and Hawk and Dusty both came in the ring. Hawk tossed Sting over the top rope and the Warriors went to work on Dusty. They were starting to set up the top rope clothesline, but Dusty mulekicked Animal in the groin. Meanwhile, Sting has climbed to the top turnbuckle in the opposite corner waiting to jump off. Animal turned around while Hawk busied himself with Dusty. Sting made the leap and had Animal pinned but just as Tommy Young brought his hand down for the third count, Paul Ellering dived in the ring on top of

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Young and not only stopped the count, but got his team DQ'd. The match itself was good enough that the ending didn't even bother me. All in all, I gave the match a B+ which is really something when you consider Dusty had a part in it.

RIC FLAIR VS LEX LUGER

This was a good to great match. Ric was just a little sub par tonight it seemed, but Lex was good, good enough to make up for anything that Flair was lacking. Both guys worked their ever lovin' butts off for thirty plus minutes. I'd like to see Ultimate Dingbat work a match that went this long and work even half as hard as Lex did. If Dingbat were to, all we'd see at the end was this little pile. Anyway, my feeling on why Flair was a little off was so that Luger could shine a little on his own.

The match itself had Luger playing the superman role with Flair walking a fine line between being legal and almost being disqualified. There was lots of action outside the ring as well. Flair let himself down for the two and three quarters count several times which the audience gave a collective groan each time. At about the twenty five minute mark, JJ distracted the ref while Flair pulled Luger out of the ring. Flair nailed Luger across the knees with a chair to set up the rest of the story line. The rest of the match had Luger limping and favoring the bad knee. When he finally got Flair up in the backbreaker in the final move, the crowd popped but so did Luger's knee. Flair fell on top of Luger, put his feet on the ropes and Tommy Young counted three. Luger protested, but Young explained (in sign language so the densest of the dense could understand) that he couldn't call what he couldn't see. Flair said in his interview after the match that this was Luger's last chance at the title. I gave the match an A-.

OTHER COMMENTS

Lou Thesz was in attendance (maybe that's the reason for all the Thesz presses at the beginning). Both Bob Caudle and Jim Ross made references to former NWA champions during the broadcast including Harley Race, Thesz and Gene Kiniski. The commentary was good again with Ross making some insider comments including reference to "Dusty's annual dropkick" and the Russian Assassins looking for a "Victory." Everyone seemed to work hard during the card and in all fairness, Ivan and JYD worked as hard as they could too (it still was a lousy match). All in all, I gave the card a B- as the last half of the card made up for the bad first part. As for comparison to Survivor Series, I'd call it a dead heat.

OTHER NEWS

Bam Bam Bigelow may have refused to do a job on national PPV but he did one last night in Chicago for Abdullah the Butcher. he is scheduled to leave on tour of Japan just about anytime now so if you miss him, that's where you can find him.

Michael Hayes is headed back in as outlined in the World Class section

Next Pay Per View is coming from Chicago on February 20. No word on who or what yet but they are practically begging Ricky Steamboat to go against Flair.

I'm hearing already that Starrcade did about a 1 1/2% buyrate nationally. Turner was hoping for at least a 2%. The Scope in Norfolk sold out and did a gate of right around \$200,000. The show did not clear as many homes as the Bash show in July did, mainly due to a conflict between the cable companies and Turner. The cable companies were not paying Turner for bad debts, i.e. people who ordered the show but didn't pay for it. Turner wanted paid for those people reasoning that it was the cable company's problem getting the money for the show, not his. The reason people don't pay is because the \$15-20 charge doesn't sound bad up front but when added to a cable bill can be a little steep. Other reasons include parents claiming kids ordered it without their permission and others who claim they forgot it was on and missed it.

THE NETWORK

I remember shortly after the death of Bruiser Brody being called by a newspaper man. He was from one of the largest newspapers in the country and needless to say, I was a bit intimidated by his call. The words that he wrote would be read by hundreds of thousands of people would be based directly on what I told him. This was one of the few times in the course of writing this bulletin that I realized the potential impact of what I was doing and frankly, it scared me.

When our conversation was almost concluded, I ventured to ask why he had called me. Besides the fact that Dave Meltzer's phone was busy and he was on deadline, he said something that has intrigued me ever since. "The underground network is more informed and more reliable than the AP or UPI on matters like this," he told me.

I had never really given any thought to what we have being any sort of a network prior to his call. Standing back and looking at what we have though, a network is a very good description. A network is nothing more than several small components that together make up a much larger one that works more efficiently than the small ones do independently. In this bulletin, the whole concept is exactly that. Everyone has a small part, contributing bits and pieces of information which in turn is compiled in to what you are now reading. The bulletin does not make Jon Gallagher or any of the other staff members any more important than those who contribute. All we do is compile and produce. everyone's part is important and without that help, the bulletin would quickly cease to exist.

Let's take a quick look at how the network operated on the day that Brody died and you'll be able to see exactly how fast information travels.

Upon his death, someone in Puerto Rico phoned Joe Pedicino of Pro Wrestling This Week. We don't know how many people Joe must have phoned from there but one was Bob Closson who used to do Mat Results and currently does Mat View. Bob called me from there. That call came in just after noon on July 17, only a few hours after Brody had passed away. The rest of the afternoon, I spent making calls to the staff of Wrestling Forum, Windy City officials (who Brody was slated to appear for in just a couple of weeks), and other fans who I keep in touch with along with a couple of other wrestlers (who had already heard for the most part). Within twelve hours of his passing and without the aid of a wire service, most of the wrestling world had been informed of Brody's murder. Within three days, the readers of both Wrestling Forum and the Wrestling Observer had the terrible news in their mail boxes.

Although I was not so amazed at the way the news spread at first (after all, this information exchange is almost a daily thing) until the newspaper man alerted me to it. News of turns, title changes, walk outs, firings, and other happenings are commonplace around here, oftentimes before the occurrence takes place. Ninety percent of the time, the information gathered here is either true or has some semblance of truth to it (occasionally the facts are distorted, but hardly ever do we get a bold faced lie...and when we do we can usually spot it). Those who are regular readers may take this network for granted; others may realize their intricate part in it all. Outsiders are constantly amazed.

Even wrestlers from time to time will be surprised at the extent of the network. After a tour of Europe, we received the results of a card held in Switzerland. After publishing those results, wrestlers wrote and called to that they were convinced that there was no where in the world they could hide without us finding out about it.

Part of this network is the wrestlers themselves. They often will call with tidbits of information, sometimes almost cryptic in nature, to fill us in on their careers or those around them. Others tend to spill their guts giving us plenty of subject matter for another tirade

or report. Their reasons for calling with information is as varied as the personalities themselves. One told me he just likes to read the sheets and that he realized that we love the sport and aren't out to hurt it. Another told me that he traveled with and worked with wrestlers all the time and he was just glad to call someone who he could talk inside with, yet someone he could talk about other things as well (like family, baseball, politics, religion or whatever).

Our network is well documented every week by the Observer and twice monthly here in the Forum as well as other newsletters such as Mat Watch and the Torch. But what we don't realize is there is yet another network that is even more complex than ours. I wasn't even aware of it until a couple of months ago when we were at convention.

I found it strange that a lot of the Memphis wrestlers as well as our guests like Eddie Gilbert and Paul E Dangerously, knew of the Forum and our work. One of the Memphis personnel, after being introduced to me, said, "You're from Knoxville, right?" The UAWF is not based in Knoxville...they had to know of the Forum. But not Eddie, not Paul, not anyone that I KNOW of from Memphis subscribes. How did they know. How were they able to comment on stories that I had run in the Forum without subscribing?

The Wrestlers' Network. They have a network set up very much like our own. While the Forum is widely read in the business, many do not subscribe under their own name. Many subscribe under girlfriend's names or totally fictitious names. Others subscribe under the office secretary's name. We have one or two subscribers that use only a first name or initials with a post office box.

One wrestler reacting to my surprise told me, "You can write a story about a wrestler in Singapore and not have a single subscriber there. I guarantee you that within a week, that wrestler has a copy of it and knows, no...memorizes what you wrote about him!"

Cowboy Bob Orton was amazed that we were able to find out about his arrest after deplaning in Detroit a couple of months back. He didn't understand how we found out and, if it makes him feel any better, have no idea how he found out about the story we ran.

I'm told another wrestler has every barometer result from the past year memorized. He doesn't receive the bulletin to my knowledge. When I ran a story about Crockett filing bankruptcy last year, I got calls from wrestlers in the NWA, one right after another. They found out about the story (it turned out to be false even though the NWA was in deep financial trouble) somehow even though not one of the ones who phoned were subscribers.

What it all comes down to is this: Your voice is important no matter how small you feel. The wrestlers, promoters, managers, bookers and practically everyone inside of this sport reads what is printed about them. In our recent year end awards, wrestlers will practically knock each other over to find out who got how many votes. The second place finishers take that second place finish very seriously. Rest assured with the network of wrestlers, even if one wrestler received one vote, he'll know about it very shortly.

"Hey Stan Fraizer!" is the voice at one end of the phone. "Guess what! You got one point for best wrestler of the year!"

Not really. But you get the idea.

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CLASS ACT OF THE MONTH
December 1988

Sit down. You're probably going to need electroshock therapy after reading this. The winner of the Class act award for the month of December is Verne Gagne.

Going back to my childhood, the AWA's biggest problem has always been no shows. Be it from double booking talent, transportation problems, bad memories, or advertising wrestlers who started for the competition a month ago, the AWA has always been infamous for its constant rash of no shows. Yet on December 13, the AWA worked with Memphis and World Class to present Superclash III and the entire show only suffered one no show.

This is even more amazing when you consider the entire line up was given more than ten weeks ago. Working with promotions other than their own had to be tough enough, satisfying not only the egos within their own organization but also those outside it as well. They even had to deal with a man who had left and was under contract with the WWF (and had started dates for them as well).

The merits of the show will be debated for a long time to come. Some people loved it, others hated it and still others were indifferent. Whatever opinion you have of Superclash III, no one can deny the hard work it took to put things together and to make sure that everyone showed up on time and in the right building. Verne Gagne is well deserving of this month's award.

DIPSTICK OF THE MONTH
December 1988

In the NWA, various power struggles are taking place that seem to be senseless. Egoes are involved and it would seem that individuals struggling to gain the power to elevate themselves into positions of power are doing so at the expense of the company. Money is placed second to power and the long term success of the NWA isn't even being considered at all. Still, we can only award a runner up award to Dusty, JJ, and others involved.

Titan sports has seemingly adopted a variation of the Golden Rule that says "Do unto others BEFORE they do unto you." This was evident at the Superclash show in Chicago when Titan personnel tried to have the main event of Jerry Lawler vs Kerry Von Erich stopped due to an obscure rule about wrestlers and boxers having to have all limbs in tact before competing. The reasoning behind this move was simple... "If the shoe would have been on the other foot, the AWA would have tried to do it to us."

The fact of the matter is, the PPV event from Chicago didn't hurt Titan's ventures into the market at all. The motive behind this attempted sabotage was nothing but simple greed. Vince tried to take his ball and go home when others wouldn't play by his rules. Now that the others have found a new ball, Vince is trying to buy the playground.

Perhaps business dealings such as this should not be subject to our criticism and would not had it not come so close to affecting the fans. The fans would have been the ultimate victim in terms of who was hurt the most, not the AWA who probably suffered a loss on the card without any help from the folks at Titan.

Retaliation may be in order and frankly, I'd like to see it providing it is within the bounds of good taste and is legal. In the meantime, a swift kick in the rear and a dipstick is given in the same spirit that Vince tried to ruin the holidays of both Verne and the fans.

Last issue we asked for new year's resolutions, predictions and assorted humorous things to use to help usher in the new year. We got quite an assortment as you can see below.

A reader who prefers anonymity made the following predictions/resolutions for some of our favorites:

Rick Rude invites a young lady from the audience into the ring for a post match rude awakening. But instead of a young lady, in walks Ron Garvin dressed as Miss Atlanta Lively. You can take it from there.

Rick Steiner will acquire a new manager or tag team partner to infuriate. Referees and announcers may make excellent foils as well.

Brother Love will present Jake the Snake with a snake skin belt and a snake bite kit on an interview segment.

Adrian Street will join the NWA and molest the Fantastics.

Mulkie Mania will start again and a fan club will form, becoming the biggest fan club known to wrestling.

Terry Taylor and Shawn Michaels resolve to get shorter haircuts.

The following resolutions were suggested by GARY FISHMAN of Kew Gardens, NY:

KAMALA - to go on a diet by eating only wrestlers who weigh less than 200 pounds.

EDDIE GILBERT - To spend more time at home with his wife (I know I would).

LIA MIAVIA - to quit watching 1940 gangster movies.

NIKITA KOLOFF - to search for and find the other half of his body.

ULTIMATE WARRIOR - to learn one more hold to go along with his headlock.

KEVIN VON ERICH - to learn English as a second language.

MATT BORNE - to remember that you are supposed to be happy when you don't have to mutilate yourself for a living.

JIM WILSON - to spend one more year reliving 1974.

ROAD WARRIORS - to quit trying to emulate Demolition and Powers of Pain.

TED TURNER - to cut his number of no shows for any given card down to six.

Nannette Johnson of Watertown NY did things a little differently. She sent in some tabloid type headlines that we might see in 1989.

The Oprah Winfrey Diet...Will It Work For Dusty Rhodes?

FABULOUS ROUGEAUS DEPORTED Jacques and Raymond try to convince US Officials that green cards and green stamps are the same thing.

PAUL E DANGEROUSLY SPEAKS TO ELVIS THROUGH CORDLESS PHONE He got my secret number claims Dangerously!

SEX CRAZED GRAPPLER GET HIS OWN RUDE AWAKENING Rick rude kisses Ron Garvin in drag!

Former Mascot Mathilda left as homeless hound as Bulldogs can the canine before departing for Calgary! A source says "She used to dine at Buckingham Palace, now she's lucky to get scraps from Joe's Greasy Spoon!"

MILLION \$\$\$ MAN EXPOSED* DiBiase secretly drives rental cars, stays at Days Inn, and eats at McDonalds & Hardees!

TURNER TO COLORIZE WRESTLING FROM 40'S, 50'S & 60'S

Atlanta Wrestling promoters often consult top astrologist "Mean Jean" Dixon before making important booking decisions

CHRIS EVERETT LLYOD DROPS HUBBY FOR JIM CORNETTE*"I love his backhand," former sexpot tennis star says!

HECOTR GUERRERO: The public is not yet ready to accept me as space alien

Pat Patterson fulfills fantasy of becoming Chippendale dancer through protegee Rick Rude

WRESTLER'S FORUM

We set aside this space each issue for wrestlers who would like to address issues or conditions in wrestling today. It can be used to address the inside fans who read this bulletin or it can be used to get something off your chest. The name of the writer will always be withheld unless otherwise specified. We do our best to protect the identity of the writer including changing names or places within the text. On to this issue's column:

RATINGS FOR MATCHES

I guess if there is any one gripe that I have with the sheets, it would be the system used for grading or rating matches that fans see live. I've gotten so I know what to expect out of Jon Gallagher because he grades his matches with the school system of A through F (with those dreaded Z, double Z and tripple Z matches which would be the equivalent of Dave Meltzer's negative star system). He grades matches we see on TV so we can get an idea of what he likes, and that's fine. Once we know what he bases his grades on, we can either agree or disagree. It also helps when he attends a live show and grades matches, since we're used to his grading system, to know what matches probably were really like live.

My objection is when he has other fans grade matches. Fans' taste vary so much that one may like a high spot only match and give a really good match a D or lower. Two hundred and some odd fans then are led to believe that the boys involved in that match didn't have a good match because one fan didn't like it. Reputations among the inside fans are built on what one fan (who may not even be that well educated in the sport) grades a match.

Editors have watched a variety of matches and tend to be a little more open and varied in what they like and dislike. They realize they have an obligation to the fans they serve. I'm not saying that fans who send in results shouldn't grade the matches. I'm saying that they should take a little time to think just what that grade might mean.

Let me give you an example...Inside fans have long said that George Steele is not capable of having anything above a D- match. But what if the match he's involved in is really good, say comedy wise. What if he has a hot opponent who really carries the match. What if the fan watching the match really enjoys the match? Does he still give it a D- just because Steele is in it? Or does he be honest and give it a B because he enjoyed it more than the Rougeaus vs Hart Foundation?

And another thing. Do we base the grades on standards set by say Ric Flair and Owen Hart, or do we base it on the ability of the two wrestlers involved? If we base it on the ability of the former, then there are going to be very few A's given out all year. If we base it on the ability of the wrestlers involved then quite possibly, George Steele is going to receive a good deal of A's. I suspect that grades are based on the enjoyment of the fan giving the grade plus stereotypes that have been established by inside fans.

I'm not completely against the grading system. It serves as a yardstick and something like that is needed. I just want to say that some fans may not be qualified to give grades unless they spend a little time thinking first. That's important because the reputations established by the sheets do carry some weight with their peers.

WORLD WRESTLING FEDERATION

I can actually see the board room somewhere in Greenwich, CT with a whole bunch of people sitting around a table with Vince McMahon at the head of it. He's saying something like, "Gentlemen, here is a list of the feuds that we have going at present. The ones on the right are the ones we are doing business with. The ones in the middle are ones that need a little help. The ones on the left are the ones that have bombed so far, but may be salvagable. We need to add a lot of heat to these and here's the plan..." The results of these ideas are what we see on TV everyweek. This is also the reason the WWF is heads and shoulders above anyone else when it comes to getting things over. Sure, there are feuds that haven't got a prayer, even if they spend a whole show on it, but this is the key to successful promoting.

One of the feuds in the middle of the page is the Randy Savage-Bad News Brown feud. In order to get things rolling here, they have Bad News come out and do a ten second squash. He then grabs the mike and verbally humiliates Randy, going as far as to suggest that at that very moment, Liz is in the back doing "favors" for Jack Tunney. Referee Dave Hebner tries to stop him and as Bad News is slapping him around, Savage hits the ring to defend Liz's honor. The result is a pull apart brawl with both guys breaking loose from the boys holding him back to resume the brawl. It wasn't a great brawl, but a good one (great by WWF standards). Meanwhile, the two have already started a series of matches across the country. Usually they'll do a count out on Savage the first time around and return the next month with a clean pin by Savage. If they just do a city sporadically, then Savage wins, but the method is varied from city to city.

One of the feuds on the left is the one between the Powers of Pain and Demolition. It's no that the fans aren't taking to the feud, but they seem to be confused about the double turn that took place during the Survivor Series. To help things along, the Powers are always preceded by pretty much a jobber match. Mr. Fuji comes to the ring while the babyface jobber is still trying to recover from a loss. He then beats him up a little and then the POP come in to do a three on one. This usually leads right in to their match with Demolition which goes either to a double count out or a double DQ. I don't know how this feud is going to come out, but one thing is for sure...Demolition doesn't dare lose out for reasons mentioned before. See, if Demo beats POP that means they are superior in the fan's eyes (A is greater than B). The POP beat up the Road Warriors which means they are superior to them (B is greater than C). Therefore, using logic, A has to be greater than C which would mean that Demolition, the Titan creation, would therefore theoretically, be greater than the Road Warriors.

Big John Studd appeared on the latest set of tapes from Florida coming out for a Brother Love's segment. He came out to boos with the fans remembering him as a heel. Brother Love gave him a heel introduction, reminding the fans that Brother Brain had been Studd's manager. Bobby Heenan then came out for a reunion, but Studd wouldn't shake hands with him or much less acknowledge him. Studd left to the cheers of the crowd.

It looks like the trend for the WWF from here on out will be to run Pay Per View shows about every three months. We've got the Royal Rumble coming up on January 15th, Wrestlemania sometime in March, the Summerslam or equivalent in the Summer and then the Survivor Series in November. Even if you don't order all these shows, it still means that just as soon as one show is over, you're going to be exposed to PPV hype for the next one. Now wrestling has always been basically a sixty minute commercial trying to sell tickets to local shows. Now it becomes even more so. There are still a few stations left around the country that run the WWF shows on a barter basis or that buy the show. I would guess that with the constant PPV hype, we'll see a change in this with stations insisting that the TV time be paid for. It may in fact open the door for other promotions who are willing to come in on a barter basis and promise no hype for PPV events. Anytime a Titan

broadcasts a commercial for a PPV event, it cost the station carrying the show viewers.

Although I haven't finished counting the year end award votes (the voting still has a few days to go yet as I write this), I would appear the Superstar Billy Graham is going to walk away with the Worst announcer award. He got my vote and after this week's edition of Prime time on USA, I'm not sure it was justified. I'm sure the reason he is getting so many votes based on his one performance in Summerslam... Every other word out of his mouth was "brother" and it got on a lot of people's nerves, including Vince McMahon. I know his one performance there is what influenced my vote for him in that category. But on this week's prime time, I didn't hear one "brother" and his commentary, though not great, wasn't that bad to listen to.

This next has to be one of the weirdest stories of the year. While heading to the TV tapings in Daytona Beach, FL, Ultimate Warrior and Jimmy Hart were driving together in Warrior's car. Jimmy asked Warrior to stop at a 7-11 and Helwig did. Jimmy spent an abnormal amount of time in the store and so Warrior, leaving the car run and headlights on, went inside to check on things. What he walked into was a holdup! The gunman pointed the gun at Helwig and told Jimmy Hart that he would "Blow away your big friend" if he didn't hand over all his money. For some reason, the gunman got spooked and saw the car outside with the headlights on and motor running. He bolted through the door and stole the car (Warrior's). Police chased him about fifteen or so miles from the scene where he would be robbed drove off the road, flipping the car several times resulting in his death. Jimmy Hart and Jim Helwig were not hurt physically though I'm told both were quite shaken up at the tapings when they finally arrived. Vince, however, wasted little time in reminding the two about the rules of babyfaces and heels riding together on their way to matches. Titan was able to cover up the publicity somewhat by using Warrior's real name and pretending he was a preliminary wrestler.

New into the WWF will be Jim Garvin who joins step dad Ron. I wonder if they will acknowledge any sort of relationship between the two. When Jimmy first started for the NWA as a heel with Ron there as a face, they didn't say a thing about them being "brothers" until Jim Cornette burned Ronnie with a fireball. Since I'm not sure if Jim is coming in as a heel, face, or jobber, it would be hard to say how they're going to handle it.

December 30 was a big night for Titan as they ran shows in two of the three biggest cities in America. New York drew slightly less than a sellout with around 14,000 and Chicago did sell out with around 15,000. The results of both cards can be found in the results section, but I'm sure that Vince is smiling all the way to the bank as he finally sees the benefits of A & B teams.

Tim Horner is in, but on TV (Prime time in particular) he's doing jobs. He sort of reminds me of the role B Brain Blair played when he was brought in back in 1984 doing jobs for Paul Orndorff but being a capable opponent rather than just a squash man.

Let's hope this doesn't turn into anykind of feud soon. Sean reports on the MSG show that Rick Rude came to the ring to give his rude awakening to some "lucky miss" in between matches on the card there tonight. He was not on the card as a wrestler. He announced that he was going to give her a special treat by closing his eyes and letting her do anything she wanted. He closed his eyes (don't get ahead of me here) and Hillbilly Jim, who was a guest commentator, came up and kissed her instead. Rude and Hillbilly got into it with Rude chasing him back to the dressing room. It could have been worse, I suppose. Hillbilly could have kissed Rude.

There had been a Saturday Night's Main Event schedule for this weekend, but I guess that has been changed. Someone thought that New Year's Eve wouldn't be the best time to catch people wanting to watch wrestling so I think it was moved to next weekend.

The latest set of tappings from Florida produced basically four weeks worth of shows. The first hour, the third hour and the fourth were taped from Florida with the second hour being devoted to a year end review. This is all being done so that the breaking of the Hogan Savage feud will be done very strategically to insure the best audience reaction. I'm still being told that the four stage plan is on track and that the ultimate result of whether Savage is full fledged heel or a tweener is going to be gauged on fan reaction.

The Saturday Night Main Event that will air will have part 1 of the Hogan Savage split, the Terry Taylor turn against Bobby Heenan and Ron Bass getting his hair cut by Brutus Beefcake.

I have on good authority that Dusty Rhodes contacted and met with Vince McMahon. My source tells me the meeting didn't last long and that Vince was not interested in the least. He spent most of the time trying to pry information out of Dusty about Turner and the NWA, but Dusty wouldn't give out anything that Vince could use. Vince reportedly was not very complimentary about the Dream for several days after the meeting took place.

The WWF also tried to negotiate once again with Terry Gordy. No dice. Gordy wants to be free for his frequent Japan tours and occasional independent shows here in the states.

LATE NOTE FROM THE NWA...Beginning next week, January 7, 1989, the WTBS show will start an hour later at 7:05 pm EASTERN, 6:05 pm central time. The show will continue to run two hours and it will be hyped as wrestling in PRIME TIME.

Also, we may see Hacksaw Butch Reed return to wrestling (he's been on the rodeo circuit as of late) in the NWA. There will probably be a serious bidding war break out soon between the NWA and WWF with talent raids being the major stories of the first few months of 1989.

PULSE ON PORTLAND

By Greg Anderson

From the ashes, the Oregon Wrestling Federation becomes Pacific Coast Championship Wrestling headed by promoter Mel Saraceno. The group made its debut on 12/3 in Oregon City and drew 300 fans with no TV. The first TV show was aired on 12/20 as a two hour prime time special.

The show feature comments from various PCCW wrestlers concerning their credentials and outlooks on the sport.

While Saraceno has publicly stated that he intended to showcase lighter more action oriented grapplers, the workrate of the matches left a lot to be desired. Truthfully, This promotion will join the OWF in the wrestling graveyard if the work doesn't improve. We have no word on when or if they will attempt to promote other towns, but time will tell on that score. I think they should hold off on any expansion plans for a while and it seems that they are. The only town promoted so far is Oregon City.

The main event of the 12/20 Tv show pitted Mike Miller and Brian Adams against the Riot Maker (Richie Magnett of Hawaii wrestling "fame") and Moondog Moretti, PCCW booker. The finish saw Tiger Chung Lee and Coco Samoa show up and Lee repeatedly clobbered Adams with the kendo stick as Samoa worked Miller over. Lee rolled Riot Maker onto Adams for the pin as there was a ref bump earlier. Miller challenged Samoa to a match on a Christmas special but they didn't book the Lee Adams match as I don't think Lee worked the card. Other matches on the 12/20 show saw Buddy Wayne draw with Ole Olson, Coco Samoa pin Billy Two Eagles out of nowhere after catching a dropkick off the top ropes from the Indian; Joey Jackson pinned Verne Seibert after an excellent spinning neck breaker though the bout was pretty bad; and Lee pinned Rocky Dellasera in another sticker.

The 12/24 (air date 12/27 another two hour prime timer) bout between Miller and Samoa saw Coco tied up in the ropes with Miller pounding him. Riot Maker then came out and choked Miller from the ring apron. Rip Oliver, who surprised everyone when he hooked up with the new group, was doing color commentary and pulled Riot Maker to the floor and slugged away on him. Oliver and Samoa are to meet on a 1/1/89 card.

To tie up a couple of loose ends from last issue, we must report that Buddy Rose lost his hair in the 12/10 match with Top Gun and was not on the announced lineup for the following week's card.

The Grappler regained the Northwest belt when he delivered a loaded kick to Tatsumi Fujinami's groin to set up a pin.

We do have a correction to make from last issue. On the combined card Owen will be having with the NWA will take place on Thursday January 12. It was announce on local TV as being the 10th, but WTBS had it listed as the 12th. I've just received confirmation that it will be the later date.

Since we have the space, I'd like to take this opportunity to wish all readers a safe and happy 1989. I also want to mention the fact that I have recently passed the one year mark of doing this column for Wrestling Forum and I look forward to many more.

RESULTS FROM ALL OVER

12/8 MIAMI (WWF) - courtesy of Jeff Bowdren...Ron Garvin pinned Boris (C)...Bravo over Duggan by DQ (Z)...DiBiase over Hercules (B-)...Brainbusters beat Rockers (B+)...Robin pinned Sherri (C-)...Lombardi over Estrada (D-)...Hogan pinned Bubba (D)...NOTES: Attendance 3000...not sure why Duggan got DQ'd...DiBiase was hot iwth every move...crowd popped big time for Hogan...lots of Patterson jokes during Lombardi match.

12/17 LANCASTER, CA (IND) - courtesy of pat Crocker...Harley Davidson over Sam Delgado (F)...Tony Rocco drew Carlos Matta (C)...Lace LeRoux pinned Susan Sexton (D)...Jack Armstrong beat Mando Guererro (B)...Goliath DCOR with Peter mavia Jr. (C-)...Chavo Gurerro, Victor Rivera, Jay Strongbow jR over Iron Sheik, Tiger Chung Lee, Steve Strong (D+)...NOTES: Attendance 70...card held in a livestock judging bard with canvas over a hay floor...Steve Strong was not DiSalvo.

12/28 CHICAGO (NWA) - courtesy of Steve Sims...Broncos beat Commandos (C)...Original ME over Fantastics (B)...Abby pinned Bam Bam (C-)...Flair drew Steiner (B-)...Lex, Dusty, Sting beat Warriors/Windham (Ending F, Match C, heat A)...Larry zbyzsko won Bunkhouse...NOTES: Attendance 2987 paid, gate \$31,200...Ellering got pinned during six man tag match...Bunkhouse was an F with oo many particip laughing...in middle Dustin and Rotundo had a shoot amateur match with the rest of the guys stopping to watch...Mike won...Warriors cheered by 99% still while Sting got about 50/50 and Dusty 0%.

12/30 NEW YORK (WWF) - by SEAN GRANDE...Blazer drew Taylor (B)...Hennig beat Koko (B+)...Bushwhackers over Bolsheviks (D)...Duggan downed Bravo (C-)...Horner over Horowitz (B-)...POP over Demo by COR (C+)...Valentine pinned R Garvin (D+)...Savage beat Bad News (B-)...NOTES: Valentine-Garvin didn't have a single wrestling hold...it was 17 minutes of slaps...Attendance about 14,000 a few thousand short of a sellout.

12/30 CHICAGO (WWF) - courtesy of Steve Sims...Casey pinned Iron Mike (Z)...Houston beat Conquistador (B)...Lombardi over Powers (B)...Robin beat Sherri (C)...Harts drew Rougeaus (B-)...DiBiase pinned Hercules (A-)...Andre by DQ over Jake (D) Hogan by COR Bossman (D)...NOTES: Attendance 15,000...DiBiase was on every move almost

letter perfect

MISCELLANEOUS STUFF

We'll take care of the trivia question first...last issue we wanted to know who the referee was who stopped the match at Starrcade between Dusty Rhodes and Ric Flair in the Million Dollar Challenge. If you said Joe Fraizer, you were correct. This issue we turn to the jobber corp for a question. What AWA wrestler was always introduced as the "Very capable _____"? Answer will appear next time and as always, there is no prize for a correct answer, this is just for fun.

Stop the presses, we have another winner for CLASS ACT OF THE MONTH making the honors this month a double winner. I just received my latest copy of PRO WRESTLING DIGEST from publisher Dennis Brent and editor Percy Pringle. It has a story about Robert Gibson visiting a very sick child at her home. As the story goes, Kelly Kiser of Greenville TN was diagnosed as the youngest patient in the US with a disease known as hyperesinophilic syndrome, a disease that affects the heart lungs and airways. In March, Kelly suffered a seizure that resulted in cardiac arrest and comatose. She recovered enough to come home but must be on a machine that helps her breathe and eat. Prior to the seizure, Kelly's biggest wish had been to see the Rock and Roll Express wrestle in person and possibly meet them. An organization called Dream Work is a non profit group that helps dreams come true for terminally ill children. They called all over trying to find either Ricky or Robert including promotional offices. I understand that the AWA refused to help. Luckily, they hooked up with PWD and they contacted Robert Gibson. On November 11, Gibson was contacted and on November 14, Kelly's dream came true. Gibson, at his own expense, flew to the child's home and spent the better part of the day with the girl and the family. Our biggest salute we can muster goes out to Robert Gibson for the time he took as we quote from PWD: "A man never stands taller than when he stoops to help a child." Honors also go out to Dennis and Percy for their part in this.

If you would like to drop Kelly a note, or make a small contribution to her mounting medical expense please do so at the following address: KELLY KISER, 417 JUNIPER STREET, GREENVILLE, TN 37743.

Speaking of PWD, if you'd like to check it out, you can get a single copy for \$4.00, four issues for \$12.00 or a year's worth at \$24.95 by sending check or money order to PWD, Box 796488, DALLAS TX 75379

Giant Baba is bringing his All Japan group to the United States for a tour. All of his regulars including Tiger Mask will be along. Touring with the group and working with each other every night are the Brittish Bulldogs vs the Rock and Roll Express. The tour is in selected cities nationwide, usually in conjunction with a smaller group. Bob Geigle is producing a show on February 2nd with Baba in Kansas City.

Be sure to check out the latest edition of MAD Magazine. It won't be hard to recognize; look for Hulk Hogan, Andre the Giant, Randy and Liz on the cover all looking at a rather indisposed Alfred E Newman (at least we think it's AEN). The inside has a story about wrestlers who are cast into movie classics that is not only funny but would also lead you to believe that the writer reads the sheets.

Speaking of magazines, I didn't have the space to comment on our name withheld letter concerning a boycott of Apter magazines. I do not endorse or support a boycott of these magazines. I think that a flood of letters from convention goers would have a lot more impact than a boycott. Bill's address is 55 Maple Ave, Rockville Center NY 11570. That's in care of GC London Publishing Associates.

Holy Cow! Was that Missy Hyatt doing interviews on the morning WTBS show?!?! Yep, by golly, it was. I don't know if she'll be doing the evening show or not, but combine her with an alternating guest color job by either Paul E or Jim Cornette and David Crockett may actually be palatable. His ratings might even go up!

Next issue we will be printing the results of our annual year end poll. Winners only will be announced with the complete results found in the yearbook. Also scheduled next time will be a feature by a fan who knew Ricky Lawless as well as anyone did. Lawless, as you will recall, was murdered in his home last month allegedly by another wrestler. The article gives some insite into the live and times of an independent wrestler and in my opinion, is every bit as good as the article we did entitled "A Week With the Fed." I just received it today and didn't have time to print it up so it'll be the feature next time around.

A late note...looks like Brian Pillman will be headed into the NWA within the next month. Negotiations had been going on for some time and I understand they have finally reached an agreement.

Just before publishing this issue, disaster has struck. We started printing what we had done on the 30th, but early on the 31st, the copier went down. My guess is that there won't be anyone open who repairs copiers until Tuesday the 3rd, and we've got a bunch to copy after that. I apologize for the lateness, but it's just one of those things (at least I keep telling myself that) that can't be helped. Holidays sometimes play havoc with our schedule. Thanks for understanding and hope to see you back here next time.

WRESTLING FORUM V 3 I 24
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What an amazing mailing label you have here! I mean, just by looking at the color of the ink, you can tell how your subscription is doing. If the ink is black, then you are current and should not worry. But if it's green, start worrying. That means this is your next to last issue. And if it's red, worry a lot. But not for long. Red means this is your last issue unless you renew. Send money, don't worry, be happy. Thanks for reading!